GRANT WRITING AIDS

The Osprey Community Foundation provides the following material to help organizations and individuals write better, more effective, and thus more successful proposal applications. We hope the aids help.

COMMON GRANT ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

COMMUNITY BENEFIT
- Will the project help a large number of beneficiaries or a needy group of beneficiaries?
- Will it address a significant community need, interest or goal?
- Will it augment or strengthen the applying organization's ability to serve the community?

THE PROJECT HELPS BUILD THE CAPACITY OF THE ORGANIZATION OR THE COMMUNITY
- Does the project provide an organizational or community capacity, service or asset not previously available?
- Will the project create partnerships or networks that enhance collaborative solutions?
- Will the project lead to significantly increased or improved community benefits in the future?
- Will the project enhance the organization's financial viability and independence?

THE PROJECT IS REALISTIC AND ACHIEVABLE
- Are the project goals and methods sound and practical?
- Has the organization a well developed work plan for the project?
- Has the organization the capacity to complete the project?
- Can the project be completed within the proposed budget?
- Are any contributions by other funders either confirmed or likely to be awarded?

THE PROJECT PROVIDES GOOD VALUE FOR THE MONEY
- Relative to the cost to the Foundation, does the project deliver a high value to the community?
- Is the project cost within the means of the Foundation?
- Will the project leverage Foundation funds with other financial contributions?
- Does the applying organization make significant use of volunteers in its activities?

SUSTAINABILITY
- Is the organization a registered charitable organization?
- Has the organization a record of successful accomplishments?
- Can the applying organization reasonably sustain the project after completion without further Foundation assistance?
- Does the organization have a competent Board of local citizens?

EVALUATION
- Does the proposal include an appropriate plan for evaluating the success of the project?

EFFECTIVE PROPOSAL WRITING

HALLMARKS OF EFFECTIVE PROPOSALS

- Clear proposal – objectives & outcomes
- Shows how it addresses a need
- Clear work plan with credible timelines
- Fits within organization's existing work
- Community support is demonstrated
- Clear layout of partnerships
- Strengthens community capacity and volunteerism
- Knows & understands the funder's requirements
- Clear understanding of what's in it for the proponent and what's in it for the funder
- Budget is reasonable and has sufficient detail, including funding sources
- Evidence the organization can manage funds responsibly
- The organization is led by a competent Board of local residents
- The project promotes sustainability
- The project will enable and encourage human rights, growth, dignity, fairness and the
- equality of all people
- No hidden agenda
- Creative yet possible approach (effective innovation is encouraged)

CLASSIC MISTAKES IN A PROPOSAL

- Preaching and proselytizing
- Bafflegab to make the proposal sound important (using the latest buzz words)
- Looking for funding to solve your own problems
- Lots of letters of support, all of which sound remarkably alike
- Generic proposals that have been submitted elsewhere
- No awareness of funder's program criteria
- Bending the proposal to fit program guidelines
- Hiding proponent's actual objectives
- Lack of sufficient detail
- Not the right organization to be doing the work
- Lack of community support and partnerships